

I oppose loosening the rules designed to promote and protect diversity of media ownership. These rules were adopted to ensure that the public would receive a diverse range of viewpoints from the media, and not simply the opinions of a handful of media conglomerates. The cable ownership

cap is a crucial element of our democratic media, and it should not be weakened.

I am the coordinator of several community and volunteer projects, and the people I work with regularly express frustration with how much all the news programs are carbon copies and how hard it is to find anything other than boilerplate entertainment. The rules allowing current mergers among media companies are already far far far too lax and let a few corporations control everything.

When a big conglomerate -- Hollinger International -- bought both a major Chicago Daily AND a couple community newspaper chains, our news coverage went seriously downhill. It's impossible to get decent local news now, even from the local paper.

Our founding fathers understood well the inherent threat to democracy of any form of monopolistic power -- especially in news outlets.

It's time to remember our democratic principles.